





M. L.

Gc  
929.2  
Oc564m  
2032761

REYNOLDS HISTORICAL  
GENEALOGY COLLECTION

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 1833 01415 2109









2032761

# THE BROKEN CLANS

---



THE CONNORS  
AND  
O'CONNORS

BY

JOHN M. MAC NULTY

LL. B., U. OF ORE.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER D-F, U. S. N. R.

PRESS OF FRYE & SMITH

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

1929

JOHN M. MAC NULTY, LL. B., U. of Ore.

Lieutenant Commander D-F, U.S.N.R.

7-7-29 7



# THE BROKEN CLANS

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
OF THE CITY OF PHOENIX  
AZ 85001

THE CONNORS  
AND  
O'CONNORS

BY  
JOHN M. MAC NULTY  
LL. B., U. of Cal.  
Assistant Commissioner D. R. U. S. N. R.

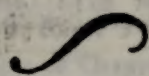
Press of Faye & Smith  
San Diego, California

1919



2032761

# *The Broken Clans*



THE CONNORS  
AND  
O'CONNORS

JOHN M. MAC NULTY, LI. B., U. of Ore.

Lieutenant Commander, D-F, U.S.N.R.

Rec'd. Feb 22-1979



5035261

# The Broken Glass

THE CONNORS  
AND  
O'CONNORS

JOHN M. MAC NULTY, L.B., U. of Ore.  
Lieutenant Commander, D-R, U.S.N.R.



Copyright, 1929

JOHN M. MAC NULTY, LL.B., Univ. of Ore., '12.

AT PRESENT

Lieutenant Commander, D-F, U.S.N.R.  
Staff Headquarters, 11th Naval District and  
Command, U. S. S. Eagle 34.  
Attorney-at-Law, Bars of Oregon, Washington and  
Proctor in Admiralty, U. S. Courts.  
Member, Oregon Academy of Sciences.

FORMERLY

Instructor, Ancient and Modern History,  
San Diego Army & Navy Academy, California.  
Commander and Chairman, Naval Militia Board  
of Oregon.  
Executive Officer, U. S. S. Vicksburg, assigned  
Washington State Nautical School.  
Nautical Expert, U. S. Hydrographic Office, Navy  
Department.  
Civil Engineering Department, Clarkson College  
of Technology, Univ. State of New York.  
Navigation Instructor, Commissioned Officers'  
School, Univ. of Washington, 1918.  
Lecturer, Astronomy and Meteorology, Public  
Schools of Portland, Oregon.





JUN 4 - 1937  
Inv. 7062

CS

499

032

M3

Dedicated to  
COMMANDER JOHN FRANCIS CONNORS, U. S. NAVY  
and to  
COMMANDER EDWARD HOLLIS CONNOR, U. S. NAVY  
True Princes of the Royal Line and fine Shipmates.





## LIST OF AUTHORITIES

- Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters. . . O'Donovan  
 Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters . . . . . Connellan  
 The Annals of Ulster . . . . .  
 Three Fragments . . . . . Mac Firbisigh  
 Irish Names and Surnames . . . . . Woulfe  
 Literary History of Ireland . . . . . Hyde  
 A Short History of Ireland . . . . . Joyce  
 The Veil of Isis or Mysteries of the Druids . . . . . Reade  
 The Druids . . . . . Kendrick  
 A Hidden Phase of American History . . . . . O'Brien  
 The Flight of the Earls . . . . . O'Cianain  
 The Irish Abroad . . . . . O'Donnell  
 Irish Pedigrees . . . . . O'Hart  
 Ancient Society . . . . . Morgan  
 Keating's Ireland . . . . . Mahony  
 Curious Questions . . . . . Killikelly  
 Kelt or Gael . . . . . Atkins  
 Celtic Religion . . . . . Anwyl  
 The Religion of the Ancient Celts . . . . . Mac Colloch  
 Etruscan Literature and Antiquities . . . . . Bentham  
 History of Ireland by Keating . . . . . Irish Text Society  
 History of Ireland . . . . . Carroll  
 Pagan Ireland . . . . . Hull  
 Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race . . . . . Rolleston  
 The Druids. Pith and Marrow of Some Sacred Writings . . .  
 . . . . . The Aryan Theosophical Press, San Diego, Calif.  
 The Brehon Laws . . . . . Ginnell  
 Ireland and the Making of Britain . . . . . Fitzpatrick  
 The Story of the Irish Race . . . . . Mac Manus  
 The Antiquities and History of Ireland . . . . Sir James Ware, 1705  
 The Catholic World . . . . .  
 Egypt Under the Pharoahs . . . . . Brugsch  
 Elder Faiths of Ireland, Pre-Christian Traditions . . . Wood-Martin  
 History of Ireland . . . . . Abbe Mac Geoghegan, 1844  
 The Glories of Ireland . . . . . Dunn and Lennox





## INDEX

TITLE	PAGE
The Living Stream . . . . .	9
The O'Connors . . . . .	12
Meaning of the Name . . . . .	12
The O'Conors of Connacht . . . . .	15
The O'Conors Don . . . . .	19
The O'Conors Red . . . . .	21
Lineage of O'Conors Connacht . . . . .	23
The O'Conors Sligo . . . . .	24
The O'Conors of Ulster . . . . .	31
The O'Conors Keenaght . . . . .	31
The O'Conors of Oriel . . . . .	34
The O'Conors of Donegal . . . . .	37
The O'Conors of Leinster . . . . .	39
The O'Conors Faley . . . . .	39
The O'Connors of Munster . . . . .	49
The O'Conors Kerry and	
The O'Conors Corcum Ruadh . . . . .	50
The Broken Clans . . . . .	60



## The Living Stream

ONE should become acquainted with his ancestors; much wisdom may be gained from a study of their customs, habits and environments. Some people facetiously say they avoid looking up their family trees because they fear to find some one who was hung for horse stealing, or probably for piracy. What if they should? Does one expect to find only nice people in a string of a hundred generations? A correct understanding of the origin and development of modern society, and one's true relationship to his generation, can be learned in no better way than from a study of one's own family history.

But people who speak facetiously so, are either being merely humorous or else they have no lineage of record to trace; in either instance they are the losers. There is much pleasure and profit in investigating the evolution of one's forefathers and their societies. An ancestry of noble contributors to world welfare, or even of dependability and good character is a powerful stimulant to the young to emulate.

This branch of history has the attraction of being personal to the student. History as it is studied in the public schools has only a secondary interest; it is impersonal and seems detached from one's everyday life. On the other hand, what fascination there must be in the study of English dynasties for the Prince of Wales or his brothers and sisters?

Imagine him strolling down the family Hall of Portraits with the latest lessons in mind; the past fairly springs to life; the strangely costumed figures before him are his blood relatives, fathers of his own father! From their bodies, comes his own life energy; without them he would not be! Realizing this, their affairs become of interest to himself; today he stands where they stood in their generation, at the head of the line! Thru the window he observes the castle walls and towers that housed them, as they house himself today.

A study of this sort cannot help but affect powerfully any normal minded person, and in the case of the Prince,





whether he be of Wales or of Hohenzollern, or mayhap even of the fallen royal Houses of O'Connor, the realization will move them to be worthy of their heritage, and to try and emulate their noble ancestors.

The present day scions of the Connors, O'Connors or Conners, the spelling is comparatively unimportant, are in no different position from that of his Royal Highness, Prince Eddy. They also stand at the head of a long line of ancestors, who in their time, were of equal importance in the affairs of the world, as were those of the royalty of England. Indeed, before the rise of Medieval England they were of greater importance. And, there is a place, far back in the early ages, where the present royal lineage of London, joins onto that of the Heremonian O'Connors in north Ireland, when the Hound dynasty (House of Con) was ascendant over much of the British Isles.

But the duns and castles of the O'Connors are either in ruins or too far away for them to go to, and this book will have to be substituted for the portraits in the Hall of Ancestors, for the views of palaces and duns seen thru the windows, and all those everyday aids to history that the Prince of the House of Windsor has available. And, if the reader will but assist the book with a lively imagination, his plunge into the ages of the past will become so vivified that he will in truth, live thru the generations again, that he has passed thru. This little book has been compiled for use as a mirror, to reveal ourselves as we were in our repeated re-generations in world flesh, as our life-stuff has floated down the stream of life from the beginning. Let this statement inspire thought; there is much in it to be chewed upon!

Herein the living representatives of the broken clans of the O'Connors will learn what sort of people his ancestors were. He will become aware of certain resemblances he and they have in common. He will note a kinship of emotions; he will begin to feel a powerful interest in their wrongs and may feel like avenging the injustices they suffered; he will rejoice in their triumphs and noble accomplishments. Once again there will be aroused in the breasts of the men and women of the O'Connors, a lively interest in the kingdoms and prin-





cialties, in the castles and duns and in the cathas of O'Connor soldiery who matched their arms with those of all the ancient world, and with the Vikings, the Norman knights and the mightiest men of powerful England without being conquered; they were defeated, but never bowed. He will feel a strange sensation when he begins to realize that all these would today, probably have been his, just as England belongs to Prince Edward, if the archaic civilization of the O'Connors and their associated tribes, had not become shipwrecked in its march toward the present.

And, what is more important, he will learn just why his little nation of the descendants of the Prince Conchovair suffered shipwreck! Much has been written on this subject, but the reasons given in this book are taken from the pages of the ancient tribal annals of Ireland, and the scribes who wrote them at the time surely knew what they wrote about.

The reader will realize that he comes from an admirable and high spirited race of free people, who were powerful as an independent nation during nearly three thousand years of world history, and who are today powerful individually, in numerous instances, accordingly as our modern social and political organization may permit.

Genealogical history is a magic mirror wherein one sees himself as he was in the past; therefore,

O'Connors! step up and shake hands with your ancestor, the first of the name! And,

Aide to the Hound of the Tribe of Murray! Meet your descendant of the Twentieth Century! He may not be much with the javelin or the battle ax, but he drives a chariot of 60 horses on the land, or 1200 in the air that puts your old four-horse affair on the scrap heap. And what is a battle ax or javelin compared with machine guns and electricity! The clan is broken, that's true, but the O'Connors are still making themselves felt thruout the world and both of you have much to be proud of, in both of you!





## The O'Connors

The O'Connors are not all of the same genealogical origin. There are several different branches of O'Connors, each founded by a man of the same name. The name of Conchovair, pronounced Conor, was a very popular one with the warriors of the Dark and Middle Ages, and this explains why there are so many separate and distinct clans of this name. Not only were they distinct clans, but they belonged to different basic races or stems of the Irish people. Some were Ir-ish, some Hebernians and others were Heremonians.

The Heremonian O'Connors lived mainly in Connacht and Leinster; the Irian O'Connors originated anciently in Ulster but the clan began in Munster; the Hebernian O'Connors anciently came from Munster but the clan was born in Ulster.

### MEANING OF THE NAME.

Before the present Christian names came into use beginning with the 10th century or probably not until the 11th century, each man or woman bore a name with some definite meaning. This was true of course in all white races as it also was with our American Indians. The Irish clans were all descended from a particular forefather, for whom the clan was named.

Among the names that were popular with the ancient people of Ireland was Cu and Con, both forms of the same word, which means Hound. Courageous and agile warriors were named Hounds. All thru Irish history may be found—

Hounds of Ulster (Cu Ulad) and Hounds of the Rushes (Cu Luachra), Hounds of Connacht (Cu Chonnacht) and there was the Hound of Coolin (Cu Chul-lin) one of ancient Ireland's most famous heroes. Probably this popularity was due to the admiration the warriors had for their giant wolf hounds that fought in the lines of battle. These great and fierce dogs were feared by the enemy, and when a warrior displayed fierce courage and agility, he was oftentimes given the honorable designation of the Hound, meaning of course,





a war Hound. In the same way nowadays we call aviators "War Birds" and our bluejackets are referred to many times as "Sea Dogs".

Frequently young men who were just entering upon their military careers were assigned to position in the line of battle, alongside of these experienced Hounds. The younger man received instruction, and both men provided mutual protection for each other. A cadet of this sort was called a "Helper" or as we would say today, he was an "Aide". The Irish word for "Aide" is Chobhair, pronounced "Covair". The young cadet became known therefore as Conchovair, Aide to the Hound. Gradually the pronounciation was softened to Conovair, Conair and finally today Conor.

Now for the final part of the name. The prefix Ui is an Irish word of a generic nature, showing blood relationship. It is the plural form; Ua is the singular form. Irish society was genealogical in nature; the tribes and clans were named after their patronymic ancestor, and Ui Conor is the group name for all descendants of Conor. Ofttimes the clan or tribal lands were also called by the same name.

In those old days when warfare and hunting were the principal occupations, each clan contested with the others for ascendancy over the tribe and its territories. They were in reality small nations in the making, independent and taking orders from superior force only. These petty governments elected their own kings and displayed their own royal standards and coats of arms.

A complete history of each of the O'Conor clans would fill a very large book indeed. Some of the reigns of the great kings whose names appear on the several lines of lineage of the O'Conors, would alone fill good sized books. The deeds of Cormac mac Art and Con of the Hundred Battles, of Kiar the son of Fergus and Cathal Red Hand, of Roderick Mor O'Conor, each would fill a book or provide an evening's entertainment on the screen that can hardly be duplicated elsewhere. The history of the Irish people, to be properly told, must be the history of Irish clans. To merely relate the incidents of a succession of reigns is not enough. Reigns and dynasties were but subordinate parts of the clan life.





There were no politico-dynasties such as we see nowadays. Citizenship was based entirely on genealogy. It is true that economics played a part; there were campaigns of conquest to secure more grass lands for cattle, raids to steal cattle, and alliances were made to build up a preponderance of power, but there were no politico-business problems like we have today. A thoro treatment of the tribal evolution of the O'Conors would begin with the pre-Roman ages, and would continue down thru every phase of the pagan world, thru the anarchy and bloodfests of the Dark Ages and the Middle Age, right into the present thru the 500 years of aggressive warfare perpetrated upon Ireland by the Normans and later by the English.

Sometime probably such a book will be produced, but it is beyond the plan of this publication to cover such a wide scope. It is the aim of the author in this little book, to sketch for the members of the broken O'Connor clans, the stirring story of their march down the ages into the present, and to stimulate their interest in the glories and sorrows of their lineal forebears, so that the hearts that have gone before, will not have lived in vain by having their sacrifices and accomplishments forgotten by their children. The clothing they wore and the language they spoke, the laws they obeyed and the objectives they fought for, were all different from those of their descendants, but . . . the emotions that stirred their hearts were the self-same ones that have been transmitted down to the O'Connors of today, or else, the present generations would never have survived the tumults of an ever evolving world.

Now, having cleared away some of the explanatory material we will begin with the most powerful branch of the O'Connors, the branch that provided scores of Kings and Princes for Connacht, and Princesses and Queens for many other Kingdoms, and whose royal house gave to Ireland her last High Kings.





# The O'Conors of Connacht

## THE KINGDOM

Their patrimony was an ancient sovereignty when their ancestor Cormac mac Art invaded and subdued it toward the close of the Second Century, A. D. At that time it was inhabited by the Bolg people (Fer Bolg), one of the original tribes of Ireland who were conquered by the Iberians led by the sons of an Iberian king named the Knight often referred to as Milesius, a latin form of his name.

The royal capital was located at Cruachan where also were buried the kings of the Fer Bolgs, and where the religious center of the pagan hierarchy had been located for ages.

Cormac mac Art, High King of Ireland, and grandson of another High King called Con of the Hundred Battles, subdued this kingdom, called Ultonmacht, and placed his son Carbri of the Liffey on its throne, as the first ruler of the Race of the Knights, and of the Tribe of Con (From Con of the Hundred Battles). The name of the country was then called Connacht (Kingdom of Con) meaning Kingdom of the Hound.

## THE CON DYNASTY

Tracing the lineage down from the third son of Carbri of the Liffey, named Fiacha Srav Teine, we come to his grandson, Yohy the Planter of the Plains, the 124th High King of Ireland, and who died at Tara in 365 A. D. By his first wife Fair Hair (Mong Fionn) he left four sons who founded clans, among them Brian the ancestor of our O'Conors of Connacht. From his second wife named Carthan Cais Duv, daughter of the Keltic King of Britain, he had Nial of the Nine Hostages. This man was the most aggressive sovereign that Ireland ever had. During his reign in the years between 358 A. D. and 405 A. D., he swept into his power nine countries, making them tributary to the Irish monarchy, some of them were on the Continent and the others were in the British Isles. He became the founder of Ireland's most powerful group of dynasties, including the O'Donnells





Princes of Tirconnel, and the O'Neils, Princes and Kings of Tyrowen and Ulster, who were the last of the Irish to rule their own people, becoming exiles in the "Flight of the Earls" in the early 17th century.

## THE HY BRIAN

But Brian Ua Yohy was worthy of his race; he became not only King over the Connacht tribes, but the father of 24 husky sons by his several wives, each of whom in turn became the head of a clan of his own. This group of clans is known as the Hy Brian, or Tribe of Brian.

Just to show how numerous were the branchings from the main stems of the Irish tribes, as well as to show just what families belonged to the same tribe that the O'Connors Connacht were Kings over, a fairly complete list will be given below:

O'Conors, Kings of Connacht.

O'Rourkes, Princes of Brefney.

O'Reillys, Princes of Cavan.

MacDermotts, Princes of Moylurg.

MacDonaghs, Lords of Corran and Tirerrill.

MacOiraghtys, Lords of the Siol Murray of the To-maltach.

O'Malleys, Lords and Admirals of Umalia.

O'Flahertys, Lords of West Connacht in Galway.

O'Brenans            O'Flanagans            O'Hanleys

O'Flynnns            O'Murrays            O'Donnellans

O'Managhans    O'Beirnes            O'Concanans

MacBrenans    O'Feenaghtys            O'Hallorans

MacManuses, Lords in Roscommon.

O'Malones, Chiefs in West Meath.

MacCosnamhas or Fords, Chiefs of the Muintir Kenny in Leistrim.

MacTiernans or Lords.

MacGaurans    O'Creans            MacKernans

O'Sheridans    O'Fays            MacBradys

MacEgans            O'Crollys            O'Bresleins

O'Finns            O'Finnegans            O'Callinans

MacHughes    O'Devlins            O'Callanans

The Hy Brian dynasty provided 16 kings of Connacht, beginning with Duach Galach, the first king dur-





ing the Irish Christian Era, altho the probability is that he was not himself converted from the old Druidic faith. The last of this list was named Muredach Maeil Lethan, pronounced Murray Mul Lethan. He died in 707 A. D., making a duration of this line of 304 years.

#### THE SIOL MURRAY

Murray was the next to create a tribe which branched from the main stem. Following down the line, thru the reigns of many kings of the Murray dynasty, we come to a King of Connacht in 879 named Conchovair who became the father of all the O'Conors of Connacht of the present day world. The Siol Murray dynasty lived to rule for less than 200 years, when the O'Conors entered upon the stage of sovereignty.

#### THE O'CONORS

This clan and its tribal stems provided the majority of the kings of Connacht from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Century. Between the Fourth and the Eighth Century, the descendants of Fiachra who was a brother of Brian, founder of the Hy Brian above mentioned, provided 14 kings of Connacht, and the O'Rourkes had two kings in the Tenth Century, and all the rest were O'Conors.

From Conchovair in 879, the patronymic ancestor of the O'Conor dynasty, the line of O'Conor Kings of Connacht traced down in an unbroken line to Torlogh Mor O'Conor, the 181st High King of Ireland who died in 1156. The following is the list of kings forming this line:

Cathal

Teige of the Tower	956 a.d.	
Conchovair	973	40th Christian King.
Cathal		42nd      "
Teige of the White Steed	1030	43rd      "
Hugh Broken Spear		44th      "
Ruadh Rig Yellow Hound		46th      "
Donal	1106	47th      "
Torlogh Mor	1156	48th Christian King
of Cownacht and 181st Christian High King of all Ireland.		





From Torlogh Mor O'Connor the royal line divides: From his son Laighnech a branch clan was formed called the O'Conors Sligo that will be described later. Their principality was Sligo, but the line of reigning kings of the Connacht tribes followed thru another son named Cathal Red Hand, who became the 51st King of Connacht, and died in 1224 A. D.

The 5th generation after Torlogh Mor, counting Cathal Red Hand, was King Aodh II (Hugh) O'Connor, who reigned from 1293 to 1306. From his son Torlogh Don comes the O'Conors Don, and from his great grandson, tracing thru his other son Felim, comes Torlogh Red, the ancestor of the O'Conors Red.





## THE O'CONORS DON

Cathal Red Hand, the son of Torlogh Mor O'Conor, lived until 1224. He was the 51st Christian King of Connacht. One of his descendants in the fifth generation afterward was named Torlogh Don; he died in 1345. From Torlogh Don came a vast population and in the seventh generation after him, one of his descendants named Hugh O'Conor Don, was head of the dynasty at the time when Irish resistance was crushed by the Anglo-Norman troops under Queen Elizabeth. He attended the conference between the Queen's officers and the defeated Irish clan leaders in 1585, and was one of the Irish lords who signed the articles of capitulation.

The articles imposed English law upon the Irish, doing away with their ancient brehon code; English land titles and tenures were accepted by the Irish clan lords, together with the principle of primo-geniture in land titles and titles of nobility, all of which was radically different from the ancient native, communal, patriarchal system which had survived from before the rise of Rome in Europe.

The native elected title of "The O'Conor Don" was taken over by the English, and restricted to Hugh and his descendants thru the oldest son. He became Sir Hugh O'Conor Don and the owner of the soil which theretofore had been owned in communal form by all of his tribe and clan. This dispossessed his relatives, making them landless. He was knighted by Sir John Perrott, Lord Deputy of Ireland for the English King, given an English title to his residence of Castlereagh in Roscommon, and made a vassal lord under the English where before he had been an elected lord of his people, who were bound to him by blood relationship, and all of them together were of blood royal being descendants of warrior kings of the Heremonian Race acknowledging inferiority to no one.

Beginning with this Sir Hugh O'Conor Don who died in 1632, two sub-branches came into existence thru his two sons, Cathal and Hugh the Younger (Hugh Oge O'Conor), both being 125th of their line. The





Cathal branch brought forth many notable peoples from its beginning in 1634 till Denis-Charles O'Connor Don appeared, as the Lord of Belanagare and Clonalis in Roscommon in 1887. In his line were Cathal O'Connor, one of Ireland's most learned historians and antiquaries from whom much of the data of this story has been received; he died in 1791. Owen O'Connor Don of Belanagare in the early 19th century, became the first Catholic Member of Parliament from Roscommon; he became The O'Connor Don in 1820 in succession to Alexander O'Connor Don who was a descendant of the line of Hugh the Younger, mentioned above. A second son of Cathal the Antiquarian, named Cathal, modernized now as Charles, brought forth a line that eventually came to the New World settling in New York City where they became noted lawyers, the last being Charles O'Connor, Attorney at Law who died in 1884.

The line tracing down from the original Sir Hugh O'Connor Don of Queen Elizabeth's peace conference, also brought forth many famous men and women. Hugh the Younger married Lady Jane Dillon; he was master of Castlereagh where he died in 1635. His son was General Daniel O'Connor who married Lady Anne Birmingham. The General died in 1667. His son was Colonel Andrew Connor of the British Army.

We may imagine how the disfranchised and land-robbd compatriots of these fortunate O'Connor Dons felt, seeing how the English social and political system was weaving their clansmen by marriage into the nobility of the invading race, making them rich and powerful, while impoverishing the ancient and true owners of the soil.

And many of the younger sons, and the landless men, seeing nothing for them in Ireland, left for France and Spain, and other lands where they sold their talents.

Among the O'Connors Don whose names we find in the rosters of foreign kings Sir Thomas O'Connor, who became a Knight of Saint Louis and a Marechal of the armies of France with the famous Irish Brigade. A Sir Hugh O'Connor became a Knight of Calatrava in Spain, Brigadier General of Spanish armies and later Governor of Chili.





A son of the Colonel Andrew O'Connor named Daniel O'Connor died in 1769 at Clonalis, his residence. Among his children was one named Jane who eloped with a Scotch Protestant named William Eccles, a descendant of one of Bruce's soldiers that entered Ireland in the 14th Century to help free the land from England. This elopement outraged the Cathal branch because of the violent departure from the traditional religion for which they had suffered centuries of persecution, loss of kingly sovereignty, and ownership of their lands. From this union came the O'Connor Eccles clan, that claimed the title of The O'Connor Don. The first son of this union was known until his death in 1839 as Daniel Eccles O'Connor Don. The claim of this branch was based on mere pride, and the Courts decided that the legal title (as per English law of course) was in the Cathal branch.

Thousands of members of the scores of branches of the O'Connor Don branch of the O'Connor dynasty, live thruout the world, in addition to those specifically mentioned above, and who have never had their lineage officially reported. Thousands of them do not know even which O'Connor branch they are members of, and today, in modern society, it makes no difference to them.

#### THE O'CONORS RED

The O'Conors Red began with Torlogh Red O'Connor, a grandson of Felim O'Connor who was a brother of Torlogh Don, founder of the O'Conors Don. He lived during the last of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th centuries. One of his strongholds was the great Rath Cruachan (sometimes called Croaghan) which from 2000 years before, had been one of the holy places of the pagan Irish, the royal cemetery of the pagan warrior Kings, High Priests and Judges of the brehon code.

This line claimed royal succession to the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Connacht as did the O'Conors Don and O'Conors Sligo, and their wars of succession, during which they accepted the Normans at first, and later the English, as allies, sometimes for the Reds and sometimes for the Browns or Dons, weakened the native chances





of driving out the English or the Normans, and eventually such internecine wars brought about the loss of their independence.

The O'Conors Red subdivided in much the same way as did the O'Conor Don lineage. In the fourth generation after Torlogh Red the founder, we find a descendant named also Torlogh Red who had three sons, named Hugh, Teige and Carbri respectively. Each of these sons brought forth a clan of O'Conors Red.

In the account of the conference held in Dublin, between the Queen of England's officers and the heads of the Irish clans, as given by the Four Masters, under date of 1585, it is stated that "The OConor Roe i.e. Teige Oge, the son of Teige Buidhe, son of Cathal Roe" was present. It was at this conference that the O'Conor Don accepted English laws and land titles, and here also The O'Conor Red did the same thing.

However, speaking for all of the tribes, this treaty of agreement failed to settle the matter any way. We find the signors later, or their disfranchised relatives, rising up against the English Lord Deputies placed over them. It was but natural that such would be so. The very form and texture of genealogical society, violently rejects the individualistic society that has been England's from feudal times, for both land holdings and governing titles and functions as well. And therefore, we find entered in the Four Masters, for the date of 1592, seven years after the Dublin compact, that "The O'Conor Roe, i.e. Teige Oge, son of Teige Buidhe, son of Cathal Roe, was hanged in Roscommon" because his sons had made war against the English. The old man was hanged for his son's rebellion, in spite of his being so old and feeble that he was totally unable to make war himself.

In 1600 we learn that the O'Conors Red and Don, were sometimes on the English side and sometimes on the Irish side. When they fought on the English side, it was because they were being attacked by the disfranchised and outraged Irish clansmen for having become English, or as allies against rival Irish claimants to their lordships, under the Irish form of law. It was a very complicated problem, and the pages of the annals





must be studied very minutely in order to understand the reasons for their bloodshed and sorrows.

#### LINEAGE OF THE O'CONORS CONNACHT.

The Gallant Knight, Race of Iber (Celt Iberia) Patriarch of the Milesian tribes of Ireland. 17th Century B. C.

Heremon, son of Knight,

Founder of the Heremonian race. 16th Century B. C.

Ugaine Mor, 66th High King of Ireland of the Heremonian Race;

ally of the Gauls. 6th Century B. C.

Angus Tuirmeach-Teamrach, 81 High King of Ireland of Heremonian line,

ancestor of the Kings of Dal Riada and Argyle of Scotland. 4th Century B. C.

Con of the Hundred Battles,

Founder of the Line of Con. 2nd Century A. D.

Carbri of the Liffey

Son of Cormac mac Art; High King.

First Heremonian King of Connacht.

3rd Century A. D.

Brian, mac "Murray the Planter"

Founder of the Hy Brian,

of the Line of Con,

of the Race of the Knight. 4th Century A. D.

Murray Mul Lethan, Ua Brian.

Founder of the Siol Murray,

of the Hy Brian,

of the Line of Con,

of the Race of the Knight. 8th Century A. D.

Conchovair Ua Murray,

Founder of the clan O'Conor.

of the Siol Murray,

of the Hy Brian,

of the Line of Con,

of the Race of the Knight. 9th Century A. D.

Cathal Red O'Conor, King of Connacht.

Ancestor of King Hugh II,

Father of Torlogh Don, Lord of the O'Conors Don.

Father also, of Felim, grandfather





of Torlogh Red, Lord of the  
O'Conors Red. 13th and 14th Centuries  
Brian Laighnech, Son of Torlogh Mor O'Conor  
Lord of the O'Conors Sligo. 13th Century.

#### THE O'CONORS SLIGO.

The O'Conors Sligo are descended from the same Conchovair as the O'Conors Don and O'Conors Reds. Their separation from the parent stock was geographical only, and not genealogical. The Sligo branch occurred when Brian Laighnech, one of the sons of King Torlogh Mor O'Conor, the 48th King of Connacht from the time of Saint Patrick, with his clan settled in and assumed the government of the territory later called Sligo. This was during the early part of the 12th century.

As soon as this branch became strong enough, they resented dictation from their senior Princes. They elected their lords from their own particular lineage. Interclan warfare became frequent; tribute being always demanded by the governing Princes of the O'Conors of Connacht. This was the usual thing however, throughout all ancient society, and Ireland was still in a stage of antiquity in the 12th century and afterward. In the wars waged between the O'Conors Don and Reds, generally for the crown of Connacht, the O'Conors Sligo were swept into the trouble on one side or the other. They were also forced to defend themselves against the O'Donnells, Princes of Tirconnel, who were continually seeking to dominate their neighboring tribes of both Ulster and Connacht. Later when the Normans came, and afterward the English, the O'Conors Sligo, and all the others as well, found themselves fighting for and against each other, with or against the new comers, until a reading of the old annals gives one a headache trying to learn who was who, and why?

Naturally, the result of such a disturbed condition, made it necessary to adopt a tribal policy of expediency; to continually shift from one ally to another, as the needs of the moment required, and so we find the O'Conors Sligo allied with their Norman enemies and against their Irish co-relatives and vice versa. Toward





the close of native Irish rule they were generally allied with the forces of England.

Their principal strongholds were located at Sligo and Collooney. Anciently and until the coming of the Normans, these strongholds were duns or raths, but the Normans introduced stone castles into Ireland, and frequently, the turn of battle placed the O'Conors in possession of the castles of Sligo and Collooney.

Christianity was introduced into the region of Sligo three hundred years before the lifetime of the first O'Connor of Connacht, but the tribe Murray, of which the O'Conors later became a branch, was located throughout that region, and therefore the ancestors of the O'Conors Sligo were among them. Saint Colum Kille of the O'Donnells built the first monastery at Drumcliff, Sligo in the Sixth Century. Like all the units of the early Irish church, that were organized with tribal or clan boundaries, the Sligo church was composed of its own clan members, and its administration was bounded by the clan territory. This form of administration was done away with later, in order to bring in the Roman system from the continent, and the Sligo unit was merged with the See of Elphin in the 16th century. Elphin was located near Cruachan, in County Roscommon; Cruachan was a Holy Place during all pre-Christian times, there were buried the pagan Kings of Connacht, the High Priests of the Druids and other notables of the ancient courts.

Toward the close of the 12th century the Normans began to enter Connacht. Sir William de Burgo was the first to enter this Kingdom. He became the Chief Governor of Ireland under Henry II of England, and during his term of office he gathered up vast areas of the lands of the O'Conors of Connacht generally and Sligo also. He married Isabella, one of the daughters of King Richard I of England, and his descendants became known as the Earls of Connacht and Ulster. The Fitzgeralds, Earls of Kildare, also came into Connacht, and took over lands.

Naturally in the beginning there were many battles between the Normans led by the de Burgos, and Roderrick Mor O'Connor, the High King of Ireland, who was





also the sovereign for the O'Conors Sligo. On one occasion, Hugh de Lacy, a Norman Earl, had built a castle at Trim, leaving Hugh Tirrell of Sligo in charge of it when he went to England. King Roderick gathered together the following clans and marched on the castle; the O'Flahertys, MacDermotts, MacGeraghtys, O'Kellys, O'Harts, O'Hughes, O'Carberrys, O'Flanagans, O'Monaghans, O'Dowds, O'Shaughnessys, Murcha O'Melaghlin, King of Meath; O'Neill, O'Mulroy, MacDunlevy, O'Carroll, King of Oriel; MacGarry, MacKilleens. Hugh Tirrell however burned the castle before they could attack it. This was one of the earliest instances of Normans in alliance with Irish versus Irish.

In the beginning the presence of the Normans added one more warring element. But as time passed from the 12th to the 14th century, they gradually merged with the Irish. The princely houses of the ancient Irish system had united with the noble Earls of the Norman race; their properties had united, the Normans spoke Irish, dressed so, and were in every way, even to having organized themselves into clans with Irish names. The de Burgos had become Burkes.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, the O'Donnells, Princes of Tirconnel of Ulster, had conquered a large portion of the O'Conors Sligo territories and made the latter tributary to them. There is a copy of their peace treaty in the Four Masters, wherein The O'Conor Sligo binds himself with a delivery of hostages, to play the part of a vassal lord under the O'Donnells, giving large payments of indemnities and relinquishing many ancient rights of independence in favor of The O'Donnell. The treaty reads little different from the ones we read nowadays, with the exception that cows instead of mines, were mentioned, and tributary rights were given instead of mandates.

In the 15th century the Lord of Sligo was Donal mac Owen O'Conor. His lands extended from the Curlew mountains to Bunduff, a rich and fertile country capable of supporting thousands. He was slain by John and Brian mac Roderick O'Conor. This left the lordship vacant and the uncle of the killers whose name was Roderick mac Torlogh Carrach O'Conor stepped in, but





the castle went to Owen mac Donal mac Murtoigh O'Connor. The O'Donnells failed to accept this change and Hugh Red O'Donnel, Lord of Tirconnel of the O'Neill dynasty, led an army of Ulstermen, Normans and Scotch against Sligo castle but they were defeated.

Donal the son of Teige O'Connor was head of the tribe bearing the ancient title of The O'Connor Sligo, in 1585, when the Queen of England called a conference of all the Irish lords, Kings and nobles in Dublin Castle. The notice of the meeting is quaintly given in the *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters* by Connellan as follows:

"Meeting called by the Queen at Dublin attended by O'Connor Sligo, i. e. Donal, the son of Teige, son of Cathal Oge, son of Donal, son of Owen, son of Donal, son of Murtoigh."

It reads very much like the Book of Genesis in the Bible, and indeed, the Irish tribes were in the same stage of social evolution as the Jewish tribes when the Book of Genesis was written by the Jewish scribes. The Irish tribes had their scribes also who wrote the history of their people.

At this conference, Donal mac Teige O'Connor accepted the authority of the English crown, agreed to scrap the Irish brehon laws and take English common law, and to accept from England title to his lands as a vassal lord, and to accept the principle of primo-geniture in titles and land inheritance, all of which was diametrically opposed to Irish civilization and the wishes of his people. In fact, he had no authority to make such agreements; Irish kings and lords were very little different from American Governors and Presidents when doing business with the same items of our political and business life. Imagine the Governor of California agreeing with the Emperor of Japan to cede all of California to Japan and to take back titles as from the Japanese Emperor! That was the case in Ireland.

But the O'Connor Sligo was not the only one to give away their people's rights and lands, but the lord of Sligo seems to have stuck with his bargain better than the other Irish leaders; whether that is commendable or not I leave for the reader to judge.





The result was that the Irish lords were made feudal bosses over their own clansmen, who were their blood relatives. The lands of their clan became their lands exclusively; their people lost their rights to elect their own lords as they had done from many thousands of years before. With their lands gone, they had no means of earning a living, nor source of supplies for self defense in case of attack. They became a landless, impoverished clan of trespassers within their own patrimony, and that was the cause of all the Irish troubles from Queen Elizabeth's time down to the 20th century, aside from the religious persecutions of course added to the politico-economic warfare.

In 1596 the common people revolted against this arrangement. The O'Connor Sligo (Donal son of Teig O'C) returned from England where he had been entertained by the English government, and mobilizing his allies, the MacDonoghs of Collooney and Ballymote, and the O'Harts, he attacked the Irish revolutionists. The O'Donnells, who were again against England, and claimed mastership over the O'Conors Sligo attacked the O'Conors Sligo defeated them and took every cow they had, with plenty of other booty, back to Tirconnel.

The O'Conors Sligo came back at the O'Donnells with battle axes and spears, in the year of 1597 under their chief Donal mac Cathal Oge O'Connor. The latter was a brother in law of Theobald of the Ships, one of the de Burgos. He secured the help of the Normans and the English thru their Governor, Sir Conyers Clifford. The war lasted until the harvest of 1598. In the meantime there took place the Battle of the Yellow Ford which was the greatest victory that Irish troops had enjoyed over the English since the first invasion.

The Irish troops were commanded by Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Ulster and the English by Marshall Bagenal with 4,000 foot and 350 cavalry. The O'Connor Sligo and The O'Reilly (Mailmora) fought on the side of the English. The Irish troops cut the six English regiments to pieces and captured all the supplies. The date was 14 August, 1598.

At the close of this battle, the Irish people were





nearer complete victory over England than they have ever been since with the exception of the last revolt which ended with the establishment of the Irish Free State. At sunset of that long gone by fourteenth of August, they had nearly all Ulster and Connacht; Leinster was nearly taken, and Munster was rising. But, it was the beginning of harvest; unless the food was gathered and stored for the winter, famine would defeat a military victory. There was no central clearing house for food stuffs, such as we have today, with rapid transportation and exchange from places of bounty to those or drought. Each tribe was its own little nation. It was necessary for the men to go home. There was no central military authority over Ireland, no national supply system, no method of holding reserves for agricultural work, and this was the thing that defeated Irish breaks for liberty always.

The victory was not followed up; 500 men could have taken Dublin Castle. The Irish victorious army dispersed; Hugh O'Neill was impotent to hold them together. The Irish system was a genuine democracy, each little tribal state was its own judge as to whether it wished to disband and work in the harvest fields, or push the victory. The Irish people were unable to see the power of England, nor to appreciate the need for a national system. So Ireland once again slept, and because of national immaturity they failed to clinch their victory and drive out the enemy.

Already the lands of the O'Conors Sligo had passed from their control, and their laws as well; their ancient patrimony had become an English county as far back as 1565, under Queen Elizabeth. The O'Conors were still alive and holding on, but alongside of them, they began to note the presence of neighbors with strange names, some of whom exercised authority backed by British guns, where formerly the O'Conors Sligo alone governed. The new people were the Taaffes, Barons of Ballymote and Viscounts of Corran; Cootes, Barons of Collooney; Scudmores, Viscounts of Sligo and Browns, Marquesses of Sligo.

Like the other O'Connors who had been robbed of their vast grazing lands and garden plots, their raths





and homes and independence and living, who were being executed for using the very name of O'Conor, for speaking the language of their forefathers, or for worshipping at their ancient church, they left the old sod, and have spread over all the world.



## The O'Conors of Ulster

There were three groups of O'Conors in the Kingdom of Ulster. The O'Conors Keenaght were of the race of Heber whose ancestral homeland was the Kingdom of Munster in south Ireland from which they had migrated into the north; the O'Conors Breazil were located in the Kingdom of Oriel in Ulster, and were of the Race of Heremon. The third group were known as the O'Conors of Moy Ith in the Principality of Tirconnel, now called Donegal.

The description of these three groups will be given in the order named.

### THE O'CONORS KEENAGHT

In the 12th century, before the coming of the Normans, there lived in the peaceful Vale of River Roa, among the oaken groves of Calgach (Doire Calgach), later called Derry and now known as Londonderry, a Prince of the tribe of the Kinachta whose name was Conchovair. The popularity of this name Aid to the Hound, borne by so many men whose descendants make up the several O'Conor groups of whom we write, is shown by their very number.

This Conchovair of the Kianachta, or descendants of Kian, had many children, who in turn also had many more children as was the habit of those far distant ages, when land was had for the fighting, and food, raiment and habitation was practically free. By the time that Conchavair was an old man, he was a great grandfather and the patriarch of a vast host of descendants, all of them naturally named Ua Concovair, pronounced today O'Conor. In this instance he was of the grade of Tiernach or Lord. His successors were elected from among his near relatives of one of proven leadership and physical perfection. In the case of the death of this particular Conchovair, his son Ruadh Rig, the fourteenth of his line from Kian the tribal founder, became head of the clan, a tiernach by rank and with the title of "The O'Conor".

The historic background of Kian should be known to





all O'Conors. He was King of Munster, of the Race of Heber, during the early 3rd century. His father was the first King of both Muhmains, later called Thomond and Desmond; his name was Olioll Olum, son of the famous Owen Mor who lost half of Ireland to Con of the Hundred Battles in 122 A. D.

Kian was married to Sadhbh, pronounced Sav and given at times as Sabina, daughter of Con of the Hundred Battles, High King of Ireland about 122. She had been the wife of MacNiadh by whom she had a son called Lewy mac Con (Lewy, son of the Hound). This step-son of Olioll Olum contended with him for the control of the kingdom. Lewy won the High Kingship and left Olioll Olum as King over Too Moon.

Kian had many brothers, but nearly all of them were slain in the Battle of Maccroom, between Lewy and their father, but Eoghan Mor, Cormac Cas and Kian himself all left descendants in great numbers. The people of Eoghan became known as the Eoghanachts, those from Cormac Cas as the Dal Cassions and the tribe from Kian were the Kianachta.

Among Kian's ancestors were Red King the 65th Milesian High King of Ireland, Red Fire another one of them, and many others.

Early in the career of the Kianachta they migrated out of Munster into what is now Londonderry in Ulster, in the north of Ireland. Strange to relate, it was about this time too, that the ancestors of the O'Conors Kerry were migrating southward from Ulster into Munster, so there was a fair exchange of future O'Conor tribes.

They worshipt the great manifestations of Nature; symbolizing the sun; the date of the vernal equinox was the holy season; the solstitial time of June was dedicated to Aodh, the Fire God; the Druids filled all the learned professions including public worship, medicine, the law and the schools, until the 6th century when Saint Colum Kille, the famous converted Prince of the O'Donnel line came to this Vale of Oaken Woods, and built the first monastery. Gradually the new religion grew, Derry became more important, in the 12th century the See of Ardsrath was added to the See of Derry which became a bishopric. Maurice O'Loghlin, the next





to the last High King of Ireland, in 1164, built a cathedral there. In the wars of Elizabeth's time, all these vast religious structures, including schools which were famous on the European continent, and had helped Europe to break thru the ignorance of the Dark Ages, were destroyed by the soldiers of England.

Sometime before the English destruction, the clan of the O'Kanes of the race of Owen, a branch of the O'Neills, succeeded in conquering the land of the Keenaght, and thereafter the O'Kanes governed. The region was called the O'Kanes country and when Ireland was divided into counties of the English type, the name was changed to Coleraine County.

In the reign of King James I, both the O'Kanes and the O'Conors Keenaght, were driven from their ancient lands, by violence, to make way for imported English settlers, who were called "planters".

The new people included families named Hare and Hanger who were Barons of Coleraine, and the Pitts who were called Marquesses of Londonderry. The Hamiltons became Earls of Abercorn and Barons of Strabane.

In the last great war to drive out the English, the O'Conors Keenaght fought under Red Hugh O'Neill, Prince of Tyrone and heir to the Kingdom of Ulster. This was at the close of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century. But the inherent weakness of the entire Irish system of society again brought about failure just when masterful leadership and dauntless courage and unselfish sacrifices had nearly brought victory. Just when Red Hugh and his allies, had cleared Ulster, Connacht and Leinster of the English, with Munster rising, the troops had to suspend fighting because the system provided no central authority, supply reserves, and all that sustained warfare needs. England was more strongly organized on a more modern basis, and she won.

The penal laws were passed making it almost impossible to remain in Ireland and be an Irishman. The O'Conors Keenaght, like their namesakes already mentioned, broke up into fragments, and the sons and daughters sought peace and comfort over all the world, as we know.





## THE O'CONNORS OF ORIEL.

The particular Conchovair who became the ancestor of the O'Connors of Oriel was an aire (Chief) of the clan Colla, a branch of the race of Heremon. He lived about the time of the Norman invasion of Ireland in the 12th century. His grandfather founded the Monaghan family and from his son Maolmichel comes the families of the Michels and Mitchells.

His tribal ancestor was Colla da Chrioch, meaning Colla of the Two Countries whose other name was Muredach mac Carbri of the Liffey. Colla da Chrioch lived during the first part of the 4th century. His brother Colla the Noble was the High King of Ireland from 327 A. D. to 332 A. D. and during his reign, the three brothers, the third being named Colla the Famous, invaded the ancient Kingdom of the Ultaigh (Ulster) and in a rapid succession of victories they broke the powerful dynasty of the Ultaigh kings of the race of Ir, burned the Irian royal palace at Emain Maka which was six hundred years old then, and drove the tribes of Ir eastward beyond the river Bann. The Irian kings here established a new kingdom in what is now southern Antrim and Down, calling it Ulidia where they held their independence during the succeeding 800 years, until their royal seat called Downpatrick was captured by the Normans under John de Courcy in the 12th century.

During the first century of the Collan occupation of old Ulster, they governed most of the former Irian territories comprised in Tyrone, Derry, Antrim, Fermanagh, Louth, Monaghan and Armagh. In the 5th century however, another branch of the Heremoniam race led by Nial of the Nine Hostages, the 126th High King of Ireland whose reign began in 379 A. D. overran the newly established kingdom of the Three Collas, drove them within the general boundaries of Louth, Armagh and Monaghan, and retained all of Western Ulster under the Niallan government.

Among the terms of the peace conference between the Niallan and Collan chieftains, it was agreed that for all time, should a descendant of the Collan princes be held as a hostage, he would have the privilege of being





bound in shackles of gold only. Oir-ghiall, pronounced Oriel, means "Gold shackles" and from this comes the name of the people and their territory, the Kingdom of Golden Shackles!

That agreement was made fifteen centuries ago, and nowhere in all history can it be found where the treaty was declared obsolete; according to the law of nations therefore, we may claim that the privilege continues, and the O'Connors of Oriel therefore have the right to demand shackles of gold when they are held as war hostages; doubtless many of them were so held during the last World War, but as the modern trite expression is "Try and get them!" Such is the real value of treaties between nations; even the very kingdoms in this case have been forgotten by all the world, altho in their day they were fully as important as France and Germany are today.

2032761

Out of the mists of a thousand years before had come the ancestors of the Three Collas; a long string of powerful warrior kings were they; it would require many volumes to relate their adventures, policies and accomplishments. There was Eochadh Feidlioch the builder of the Palace of Cruachan of Connacht and Crimthann Niadh Mor the 91st High King who was reigning when Christ was born. His son Tuathal Big House (Teach Mor) who lost his crown and appealed to the Roman Governor of Britain for assistance in recovering it, but without success. His son, the Hound of a Hundred Battles (Con Ced Catha) one of Ireland's most famous warrior pagan kings who was 110th of the Throne of Tara, and his grandson Cormac mac Art (Son of Bear) the Solomon of all Irish history, law-giver, author of kingly treatises, war king, whose brilliant court was composed of 1000 people including a populous harem. His Psalter was copied into the Psalter of Cashel by the Bishop-King of Munster, Cormac mac Cullenan, which was in existence in 1454 and copies of portions of it are now on file in the Bodleian Library of Oxford.

An uncle of the Three Collas named Fiacha Srav Teine who was 120th of the Throne of Tara was ancestor also of Nial of the Nine Hostages, founder of an





Irish Empire covering much of the British Isles and long since forgotten to historians of the usual schools.

The Collan Princes had their seat of government in one of the holy places of the pagan priesthood called Cloch Oir (Gold Stone), now called Clogher, where a golden idol of Crom, the Irish Thor stood under the oaken boughs.

Crom passed and Christ became the holy one when Saint Patrick the former slave of Nial of the Nine Hostages returned to convert his masters to the new faith. The Patron Saint himself brought Christianity to the O'Connor ancestors of Oriel when he founded the See of Armagh which has ever since been the metropolitan See of all Ireland. His church was built on the Heights of Maka (Ard Maka now Armagh) where Queen Maka Red Hair of 300 B. C. had constructed her celebrated Palace of the Brooch of Maka that was burned by the Three Collas in 332 A. D. after the decisive battle of Achy Leth Derg when the Ultaigh were defeated. During the 12th century, Donogh O'Carroll the last King of Oriel, in partnership with Saint Malachi, built and richly endowed the first Cistercian Monastery in Ireland, at Armagh, called the Abbey of Mellifont, which was burned by the English in the 16th century.

From about the time of Saint Patrick, in the 5th century, and until the 12th century when the kingdom was overrun by the Norman knights, the O'Carrolls were kings of Oriel to whom the O'Connor chieftains owed allegiance.

Down the corridors of time the generations marched, multiplying and subdividing into the clans of the O'Hanlons with Feig as their forefather. Colcan became the grandfather of no less than four saints of the church, and Maonachan became the father of all the Monaghans, and he was also grandfather of the Conchovair head of all the O'Conors of Oriel. Other branches were the Hydes, Michels, Shannons and Mitchells.

In 1585, Sir John Perrott, the Lord Deputy for Queen Elizabeth of England, who appears to have been a very busy man in assuming English domination over the Irish people, created English counties out of O'Car-





rolls land (Louth), the O'Connors lands and the rest of them, and by process of his imported English law, he declared all the native Irish to be trespassers within their own ancient patrimony.

Having the backing of a strong centralized power, with riches gathered from the Spaniards thru the piracies of Sir Francis Drake, Walter Releigh and their followers, and with the Irish disorganized as has been explained heretofore, because of the very nature of tribal society, he was able to "put over" his program and having harassed and driven off the Irish he brought in to the broken Kingdom of Oriel English families and gave them the Irish lands for their own. The families who took the places of the defeated and dispossessed MacMahons, Princes of Oriel, were the Atchesons and Brownlows; the O'Hanlons who were the hereditary color bearers of the Kingdom of Ulster were driven out by the Powells and Hamiltons. The MacGuires, who had been Lords of Fermanagh were superseded by the Rowellstons and St. Johnses. Likewise went the O'Reillys, Princes of Hy Maine and MacCanns, the O'Flanagans and all the rest of the tribe of the Collas, who were co-lateral families with the O'Conors of Oriel.

From that time on, from the beginning of the 17th century the O'Conors of Oriel have been a broken clan, dispersed over all the earth, like their namesakes of Connacht and Leinster and Munster.

#### THE O'CONNORS OF DONEGAL.

If you are an O'Connor whose forefathers came from Donegal, you may feel safe in claiming that they were formerly the owners of the Plain of Ith, spelled Magh Ith and pronounced Moy Ith, in Donegal. This being true then you are a member of the Race of Heremon and a direct descendant of a man named Conchovair who lived in the early 8th century.

His father was King Fargal, the 156th High King over all Ireland with his royal seat at Tara and who was slain by Moroch, King of Leinster in 718 A. D. Conchovair's mother was a princess of the royal house of Connacht, and his brother Nial of the Showers (Frassach) became the 162 High King of Ireland.





Conchovair became the ancestor of two co-lateral clans, one descended from his son Gruagan (The Hairy Man) and the other from another son named Dermod. Gruagan O'Connor's descendants split up into the Grogans and Gregans, while those of Dermod divided into the O'Carlains, Calins, Carolans and the Kerlins.

Conchovair was the sixth generation in descent from the 131st High King Muircertach Mor mac Erc who ascended the Throne of Tara in 512 A. D. and whose brother Fergus mac Erc became the first Milesian King of Scotland and from whom are descended all the Scotch royal houses as well as the present royal house of England, the latter thru the Scotch Stuarts.

This group of dynasties were founded by Nial of the Nine Hostages, King of Ireland from 378 to 405 A. D. From his son Eoghan, who founded the Kingdom of Tir Eoghan, called Tyrone, comes the line of the present O'Conors of Moy Ith.

Tracing the lineage backwards thru the generations, we come to Eochaidh Moyvone, who from another wife founded the Hy Brian, the parent tribe of the O'Conors of Connacht, and five generations back from Nial of the Nine Hostages we find Cormac mac Art, the 115th High King who reigned in the middle of the 3rd century.

This O'Connor lineage leads from Cormac mac Art thru his grandson Fiach Srav Teine, the 120th High King, and from another grandson called Eochaidh Black Pool (Dubhlin) runs the line leading to the famous Three Collas, they were the sons of Black Pool, and from one of them it will be remembered, Colla da Chrioch came the O'Conors of Oriel. Cormac mac Art was therefore, the common ancestor of the O'Conors of Connacht, of Oriel and of Donegal.





## The O'Conors of Leinster

### THE O'CONORS FALEY.

In the year of 979 there lived near what is now Philipstown in the County of Kings, in his great Dun of Dangan, a Prince of the tribe of Ui Failge named Conchovair. This was more than two and a half centuries after the death of that other Conchovair who became the founder of the O'Conors of Donegal in Ulster. The Conchovair of whom we write now, is the ancestor of the O'Conors Faley of the Kingdom of Leinster.

He was of the 13th generation of descent from Rossa Failge, the tribal founder of the Ui Failge, and who was the oldest of thirty sons born to the High King Big Battle Chief, usually called Cath Aire Mor in Irish history, the 109th High King of Ireland, living in 177 A. D.

The descendants of Rossa Failge, meaning Rossa of the Rings, are called the Ui Failge, pronounced today as O'Faley. The territory owned by them was called Offaley and was a principality of the kingdom of Leinster. It included all of Kings County, some of Kildare and much of Queens. Before the Normans came, the princes of Offaley lived in numerous great duns; afterward, they became owners of some of the stone castles erected by the Normans.

Because they were subject to the Kings of Leinster, something of this country should be given in explanation of the origin and meaning of its name. Before the Invasion of the Milesians it was occupied by a race of people called Fer Bolgs, meaning Spear Men. These people were a branch of the Belg folks of Gaul, now either a part of France or Belgium. Another word for spear was "laighin" and the word for land was "tir". This country therefore was called the Land of Spears, or Laighins-tir. (Leinster).

Before the rise to power of the O'Conor branch of the O'Faley tribe in the 10th century, the tribe produced a long line of powerful and able kings and high kings. Beginning away back in the 6th century before





Christ, we find one of them named Ugani Mor exercising royal power over the entire British Isles. Here is something not usually mentioned in the school histories. His son was married into the royal house of Gaul, to a Princess named Kesair. Angus the Sage was the 73rd High King of Ireland. And, Strong Man the Fearless (Fergus Fortamhail) the 80th High King, was slain in the year 384 B. C. The 99th High King of Ireland named Conor Red Brows, was an ancestor of Rossa Failge, who founded the tribe of which Conchovair was a Prince in the 10th century A. D. Conor's descendant in the sixth generation was Big Battle Chief, father of Rossa. He lived in 177 A. D.

From Rossa's time to that of Conchovair, the Irish world was little different from that of the European continent in its civic and economic life. The pages of the annals are filled with accounts of raidings and wastings, burnings and killings. There was no central monarchy with power to subdue the warring elements. It is true that Christianity brought a popular enthusiasm for education, and hundreds of great and small schools sprung up everywhere. Outside of the monastery schools, warfare and hunting continued as the national sport.

And then came the Vikings! From the 8th to the 11th century the coasts of Ireland were ravaged by fierce bands of Norse pirates that were the scourge of all Europe. They succeeded in digging in at Dublin, Waterford, Limerick and Cork, and making these cities Viking strongholds. From these ports went out the great expeditions that burned and looted the rich cities of Britain, Gaul, Italy and Spain. We may believe that it was from these towns that some of the ships left for Paris, when that city was captured. Probably many of the Vikings from Ireland became settlers in what is now Normandy, and whose descendants were with William the Conqueror of England. Still later they returned to Ireland as Norman knights.

It finally became necessary for Brian, King of Munster, which includes Cork, to try to subdue these foreign troublemakers. He was opposed by Sitric III, Danish King over Dublin, and as luck would have it, Sitric was a nephew of Maolmora mac Murrogh, King of





Leinster. Here was an alliance between the Vikings and the Irish. Not only that, but mac Murrogh had little use for the Munster King, because Brian claimed the jurisdiction of the High King, and had defeated Leinster and collected tribute from him. Another point, and one not to be underestimated; the sister of the Leinster King, who was mother of Sitric, had been a wife of Brian of Munster and they had fallen out, leaving her his enemy. Her name was Gormflaith, and she stirred up every Leinster chieftain and Viking she could against Brian.

The result was that 12,000 Vikings from all over the western islands and Europe came driving down thru the foam in their long, black boats, flying the black raven banner. They landed on the beach of Clontarf, on Palm Sunday, the 18th of April, 1014. To this great army Dermot mac Murrogh added 9,000 Irish troops including the O'Conors Faley under the leadership of mac Brogarvan, Prince of Offaley. But the O'Conors from Connacht under Teige O'Connor, King of Connacht, and the O'Conors of Munster under mac Beotach, Prince of Kerry Luachra, were on the other side; they were fighting under Brian of the Tributes for the freedom of Ireland from the Vikings, and incidentally for the relief of all Europe and the British Isles. Thus we see what fate sometimes does to the best of people.

The battle occurred on Good Friday, April 23rd, 1014, but Ireland paid heavily for her victory. She was bled white. Brian and the most powerful chiefs and soldiers were killed.

With the powerful hand of Brian of the Tributes gone, there was no one to hold down self seeking chieftains; Malachi of the Collar of Gold who succeeded him, proved unable to complete the re-establishment of the central Irish monarchy undertaken by Brian, and anarchy and dissolution became the rule of the years that followed.

And then came the Norman soldiers of fortune, led by Europe's most skilful knights, armed far better than were the Irish, and with England at their back as a source of supply. They appeared hardly more than a cen-





tury and a half after Clontarf, and at the request of another mac Murrogh, King of Leinster, and a woman again was the cause of it all.

In 1152 Dervorgilla O'Rourke, wife of the Prince of Brefney in Connacht, eloped with Dermot mac Murrogh, King of Leinster. She was over 40 and he over 60, but that seems not to have prevented them from engaging in an autumnal romance. The nobility and royalty of Ireland were shocked. Roderick O'Connor was King of Connacht, overlord for Brefney, and also claimant to the Throne of Ireland, as Brian had been before, and of course anxious about his Leinster tributes which amounted to no little donation. Immediately, with his allies he invaded Leinster, captured the errant Princess and drove the king into exile.

Mac Murrogh went to Henry II of London for help; he was sent to Richard de Clare, Norman Earl of Pembroke in Wales, whose other name was Strong Bow. They struck a bargain. Strong Bow was to recruit an army among his poverty-stricken knights, and land on the coast of Leinster where mac Murrogh would reinforce him with his troops. Strong Bow was to be given Eva, daughter of Mac Murrogh as a wife, and he was to succeed to the throne upon the death of Mac Murrogh.

All of which came true! The first detachment landed at Wicklow in May, 1169. They came ready for business. Their armor, for man and horse, was a new thing to the Irish who still fought as had their forefathers during the Dark Ages. The Irish were individually equal to the best warriors in all the world, but they were unorganized and their methods were those of the ancient world. As compared with the modern knights of the 12th century in Europe, they were like gallant old John L. Sullivan meeting Jim Corbett; they lacked modern military organization.

Dermot mac Murrogh finally died and the Norman Earl and Eva, became the King and Queen of Leinster, according to the agreement. Strong Bow immediately placed Leinster under feudal conditions like those he was familiar with in England and Wales. The old system of election of kings and lords was scrapped by him.





Raymond Fitz William Fitz Gerald had married his sister Basilea, and he was made Constable of the Kingdom with large holdings in Offaley. What the O'Conors may have thought of their lands being given away was of little interest to the Normans. Raymond who was better known as Raymond le Gros, built a great stone castle in Offaley, and moved in with his bride and began to enjoy life. At this the clan O'Conor raised some little hell, and the King hearing of this sent for the chief of the O'Dempseys, a branch of the O'Conors Faley, to report to him.

"Since when has a Norman become an Irish king?" inquired The O'Dempsey. He probably had the same sort of contempt for the Norman knight that one of his American descendants named Jack Dempsey, had for a certain marine we know of lately. And, the Norman knight enlightened The O'Dempsey as to the value of scientific training in the same way that the marine did for Jack. The O'Dempsey and all his other O'Dempseys were driven from their ancient holdings in the Kingdom of the Spears, together with their relatives the O'Conors Faley. So far as Strong Bow was concerned, that was that!

And from then on the same old process that occurred in the Viking Era took place. First there were raids and burnings, Norman castles were captured or burned, by the Irish. This became tiresome and gradually the upper classes of both sides, began to hold peace conferences and banquets. The knights married Irish Princesses, and the process thus went on. By the end of the 15th century, the Fitz and Mac families were exchanging names and drinking whiskey out of the same loving cup.

The descendants of Raymond le Gros Fitz William Fitz Gerald left a long line of descendants calling themselves the Fitz Maurices from his son Maurice. In the meantime they had been holding down Irish lands belonging to the O'Conors, Princes of Offaley, but later we find them all married up with each other, and with the Fitz Geraldts, the senior branch of this group of Normans.

But it took some time and plenty of dirty work had to be washed out before the Normans became Irish. For





instance, in 1305, Sir Pierce de Birmingham was trying to live on the lands and labor of Irishmen with little success. His vassals were being punctured by Irish javelins, his cows stolen and his windows broken by the Irish boys' slingshots. So he called a peace conference in his castle at Carbery, owned by the O'Conors. Murtoth O'Connor was then Prince of Offaley, as much as he could be with the Normans taking over everything, and he, with his brother Calvach and 29 of their chieftains, went to the castle.

When Irish war chiefs held such conferences, they treated their enemies with the greatest of consideration and courtesy, and so when they had all gathered within, and were surrounded by armed guards, who arrested every man of them, they felt hurt indeed. They were hurt still more before they got out, because not a man of them all came out of the castle alive. Norman treachery gave them a taste of what real hatred means. The Irish always fought for the fun of the game, but the Normans were fighting for land; that was the difference. In 1328 this same Birmingham and his brother, the Earl of Louth were killed by their own people, so probably they were especially undesirable characters.

In 1399, Felim the son of Cathaire O'Connor Faley, heir to the Lordship of Offaley died of an epidemic, and his sister who was the wife of Gilpatrick O'Moore, Lord of Leix, also passed away. During the early 15th century, this Lord of Leix and his son in law, The O'Connor Faley, made an alliance with each other, and for years, together with Calvach O'Connor, they made it pretty hot for the Normans in Offaley. Finally, The O'Connor Faley, named Murrogh, died in 1421 leaving Murtoth O'Connor as successor. He was buried in the Monastery of Killaughy in Kings County. Murtoth died soon and left Dermot O'Connor as lord over Offaley. The daughter of Calvach O'Connor married the Prince of O'Donnells in Tirconnel of Ulster; she proved a good diplomat when the O'Donnells and O'Neills broke out in a small war in 1433. She made peace for them, and at this time it was important.

It so happened that the Irish were beginning to get together for defense. They had formed an alliance of





the following clans: O'Neils, O'Rourkes, O'Donnels, O'Reillys, O'Conors Faley, O'Malloys, O'Maddens, Mac Geoghegans, O'Melaghlins, and others. It was important for them to all get along together and the work of the daughter of Calvach O'Conor saved the alliance. This alliance soon drove the English troops practically out of Offaley, Meath, West Meath and Annaley.

And just when everything looked rosy for the Irish again, that ungovernable independence that always wrecked things broke out. The uncle of this very diplomatic O'Conor Princess, whose name was Cathaire O'Conor, broke out in 1437 against her own father, the Lord of Offaley, and joined the English. Before he was suppressed he burned several of her father's castles.

The war against England was pushed more fiercely than ever during the 16th century. It was in this century that the Irishised Normans finally turned against the King of England and declared themselves for the Irish cause. This revolt was led by Silken Thomas Fitz Gerald, the Earl of Desmond in south Ireland.

But the English called a peace conference, like the one old Norman de Birmingham held back in the 14th century. Silken Thomas had been captured and was in the Tower of London. His five brothers were invited to a banquet by the Lord Deputy Leonard. They all came, like the Irish did in Offaley, and like them also, they were all arrested, sent to the Tower and later executed in Tyburn, where their heads were exhibited to show the power of the English king.

The O'Conors of Connacht, those of Offaley, the O'Briens of Thomond, the O'Neill's of Tyrone and the O'Donnels of Tirconnel, all formed together a league called the Geraldines, to save the power of the Fitz Gerald's in Ireland! Could you imagine back in the times of Strong Bow, when he was chasing the O'Conors and the O'Dempseys across their fields, out of Offaley, that the time would come when the lordly Fitz Gerald's would be dying for Ireland, and Irishmen would be dying for Fitz Gerald's?

It was during this campaign that the English first brought cannon into Ireland. In 1535 when the castle of Maynooth, the stronghold of the Fitz Gerald's was





being besieged, that a cannon was put into the fight, and in 9 days the castle collapsed and not a man within was found alive. Doesn't it make you think of the big German gun that carried for 75 miles into Paris? Something brand new and surprising, as was the little old gun to the Irish in 1535.

Lord Grey the Deputy, who by the way was married to a Fitz Gerald, altho he came close to exterminating them to please his leige lord Henry VIII, finally lost out at Court and Henry had him also executed. The price of failure in those days was not what it is in America today, when a politician leaves his job. With Grey out of the way, the Irish began all over again, and this time a member of the "planted" English class, named Bellingham led the English against the O'Conors of Offaley. This Bellingham had 600 cavalry and 400 foot soldiers. He defeated the clans of Offaley, drove them from their homes, burned the houses, and left them to starve in the swamps and mountains.

In the years of 1555 and 1556 there came an end to the old principality of Offaley. The power of Queen Elizabeth over a great portion of Ireland had become enough to warrant the organization of the English forms of government. Furthermore, the native tribes were driven from their ancestral lands and in their places, in Offaley, we find the Bellinghams and Digbys, Barringtons and Bowens, the Cosbys, Hartlepoons and Hovendens, Hetheringtons and Rushes. The O'Conors and their branches, such as the O'Dunns and O'Dempseys, Mac Colgans and O'Mulloys and O'Carrolls, were being hounded like wolves and driven into the swamps and mountain fastnesses.

But it required more than physical sufferings to bow the spirit of those Irish warriors and their courageous and hardy women. Every once in a while, they gathered together and challenged the troops of the English king.

It has been believed by most of the world, that the main issue was due to religion, that the Irish were so bigoted that they were unwilling to live with Protestants. This issue is absolutely wrongly understood. When Mary followed Edward VI in 1553 as the sovereign of England, the persecutions of the Irish were not





a whit less than they were under Protestant sovereigns, and she was a Catholic. The issue was first and last, the march of English imperial power and the greed for lands and the wealth to be derived from possession of Ireland; this and this only was the basic reason for racial wars, and the religious issue was merely the slogan, both of offense and of defense; it was that touchy spot in human psychology that proved valuable to irritate. Elizabeth ascended the throne in 1558.

The guerrilla warfare carried on by the Irish clans from their fastnesses in the deep forests, became so unbearable that Sir Henry Sidney, the Lord Deputy for England in the year of 1577 decided to hold another one of the famous English conferences with the heads of the Irish tribes and clans. He invited all of the Irish tribal leaders to meet him at the great Rath of Mullaghmast in Offaley, on New Year's day of the year of 1577; it was the 19th year of Elizabeth's reign and she was demanding results from her political servants.

About 400 Irish chieftains met together at the time and in the place mentioned, hoping to see an end of their sufferings and willing to listen to the proposals of the English Lord Deputy. If they had only remembered the peace conference of the year of 1305 when all the Irish were killed, or of the peace conference with the six Geraldines when all were killed in 1535. It was the same old trick; no sooner had the 400 clansmen gathered together on the hill top, unarmed, than three lines of English soldiers on horseback, swiftly surrounded them and killed every man of them. Naturally this sort of thing failed to produce the peace sought for except insofar as the 400 were concerned; Sir Sidney had no further trouble with them, but there were thousands left, and they continued the fight for justice and freedom.

In 1597 the Irish had their turn at massacring. However, they did their work in fair and open warfare. Hugh O'Neill, Prince of Tyrone, had revolted and Owney O'Connor Faley had been placed in command of a detachment of troops in Tyrell's Pass. The English troops were decoyed into this pass and were slaughtered to a man. Owney O'Conors hand was so swollen from





swinging his sword that he had difficulty in releasing his grasp of the hilt. It was a bloody carnival indeed, but the Irish warriors from Offaley had many scores to revenge and they made the best of the opportunity. All thru this campaign the O'Conors Sligo of Connacht fought as allies with the English, not only against the O'Conors Faley of Leinster but against their own tribal lords, the O'Conors Reds and Browns of Connacht.

But the gallant revolt of Hugh O'Neill failed and under the date of 1600 the Four Masters enter a pathetic report in the following words, taken as given:

"O'Connor Faley of the tribe of Brian, son of Cath Aire Mor, son of Con, son of Calvach, was in alliance with the Irish for three years until this year; during this time they demolished nearly all of the castles of Offaley except Dangan. The English destroyed all the crops and the O'Faleys were forced to migrate and disband the clans and go to Ulster and other countries."

That was the end of a noble race. We find them everywhere, in all countries, some sitting in the seats of the mighty and others laboring in humble tasks; whatever they are doing, their ancestors have done the same. Herewith we close the story of this branch of the O'Conors; to trace them down to the present is another task; it is not for this book. Each one may do that for himself by referring to birth reports, marriages, deaths and other evidences of value to those who trace family trees. The writer here must hurry on and give the history of the O'Conors of the Kingdom of Munster, and then the book will be finished.





## The O'Connors of Munster

There were two O'Connor clans in the Kingdom of Munster; both were of the Race of Ir and of the Clan of the Red King. Two brothers, sons of Fergus mac Riogh, King of Ulster, founded the parent tribes of both O'Connor clans. From the son Kiar comes the tribe called the Kiaraidh, a branch of which became the O'Connors Kerry, from one of its princes named Conchovair. From the other son named Corc, comes the other tribe called the Corcum Ruadh, and another Prince Conchovair rose up in this tribe and founded a second clan called also the O'Connors Corcum Ruadh. That is how there are two clans of the same name in Munster. The case is identical with that of the O'Connors of Connacht.

There is plenty of historic romance in their origin. Fergus mac Riogh was making good as the King over the Ultaigh, in the early part of the First Century, A. D., when he took on another wife named the Drunk; Nessa. being the gaelic form. She had a son by another union named Conor mac Nessa, the children in those days being called after the mother due to the fact that Ireland at that time was still in the matriarchal stage of society, and the women had more than one husband.

Nessa induced Fergus to abdicate the throne in favor of Conor mac Nessa; probably Fergus had little to say about the matter. Later in life Conor, who had been a very able ruler, disgraced the throne of Ulster because of his assassination of three young nobles of the Clan of the Red King, in order to appropriate for himself the flapper wife of one of them, whose name was Bad Luck, or words to that effect; Deirdre being the native form.

Whether the all-powerful women or Conor's rivals for the throne that caused all the trouble is difficult to determine, from the conflicting stories, but anyway, Conor lost the backing of many of his knights, among them Fergus mac Riogh, who with his sons and troops, left Ulster forever, and joined the forces of the Queen of Connacht, Conor's bitterest enemy and who also was a former wife. Ex-wives oftentimes act like that here in





America, and probably Conor was delinquent with his alimony payments.

Maev the Connacht Queen comes down to us as a warrior Queen who led her own troops to battle, and swung a wicked javelin from her swift tumbling chariot. She had a husband already named Oilíoll, but he was growing aged and being complete boss of her own Kingdom, Maev added Fergus to her household. This caused no little jealousy among the Connacht soldiery, because the Ultaigh of Ulad (Ulster) were just as friendly as the French and Germans have always been since the Franco-German war.

Maev brought forth three noble sons for the ex-King of Ulster, whose names were Conmac, Kiar and Corc.

Kiar and Corc raised large families, as was the custom in those days when the economic problems were solved by a midnight raid into the pastures and towns of one's enemies. And by the time that Fergus was killed by a jealous Connacht noble, and Maev had gone to the Land of Pleasure, as the Irish called their heaven, their following were numerous. But after their parents were gone, they soon learned that Connacht was unfriendly to them, and they migrated southward, seeking more desirable homelands.

Like Moses leading his people these two brothers wandered with their tribes, thru the forests and plains of friends and enemies and only when they had entered the most southern kingdom of the land did they find freelands open to settlement. This land was known as Des Mumhan, pronounced Des Moon, which later was called Desmond. For the next seventeen centuries the Kiaraidh and the Corcum Ruadh were to make this their homeland.

#### THE O'CONNORS KERRY AND O'CONNORS CORCUM RUADH.

And their homeland was worth living in. It was one of the world's most beautiful and fertile spots. From its craggy peaks to its golden sandy beaches, there was everything that a joyful people could wish, and it should be remembered that the Irish people are bubbling with God's good cheer and joyfulness. The forests that spread





over the valleys and up the mountainsides, were of ash and oak, birch and alder and pine. Its winding streams and silvery lakes were teeming with fish and wild game of all kinds ranged the woods. Over its vast grassy plains their flocks of sheep, horses and cows grew fat upon the sweet herbs.

Generations and centuries passed; the tribes worshipped their native gods according to the teachings of their *crom fer* (god men); they lived, loved and died accordingly as their slowly changing environment governed. They became numerous and powerful and their neighbors of the Race of Heber respected them.

With the coming of Saint Patrick in the 5th century they gradually became interested in the new philosophy, faith and form of worship, already nearly 500 years old on the European continent. There was something in the new system that became popular and the elder faith that had been theirs for nearly two thousand years melted away. Probably it was the popularizing of learning that did it; under the Druid priests learning was a monopoly of the priesthood, but the new order of Christian missionaries, preachers, teachers and saints, laid their learning freely before everyone, and the people hastened to drink of their wisdom.

The Kiaraidh and Corc Modh Ruadh produced their share of these early saints and scholars. We should not look upon them however, in exactly the light that they are so often times painted. The pages of the old annals reveal these saints as men and women of action and practical affairs. They founded schools and colleges by the thousands, to which flocked students from all over the British Isles and from Europe as well. Many Princes came from backward countries, still suffering from the Dark Ages, and who later became historic figures; Alfred the Great of England was one, just to mention in passing.

These teachers were popular because they taught subjects that the people thirsted for. They operated classrooms and shops, gardens and laboratories. They taught all the trades of their times, all the professions as well, besides their Sunday school lessons. In the pictures we see them with halos about their heads, but in their life-





time, if we could step back, we would see them swinging a sledge, or showing their students the art of illuminating books, between prayers. And in their investigations into philosophy and science, there was no hesitation due to the fear of being charged with heresy or unorthodoxy. Not in those early times; some of those distinguished Irish scholars pierced the darkness with as sharp a beam of light as the most radical thinkers of more recent centuries; it was a new movement, the fundamentalists then were the Druids; the progressives were the Christians.

One of the men of Kiaraidh, pronounced Kerry as we will hereafter give it, was Saint Brendan. He was a famous navigator of the 5th and early 6th centuries. His books of travel were standard all during the Dark Ages. Savants still believe that he was the first European to see Iceland and America. It is an accepted fact that Irish monks were living in Iceland when the Vikings first discovered that island, and the native descriptions of the long-bearded white man who taught the Mayas the secrets of agriculture, letters, and other arts of peace, bear strong resemblances to the Irish monks and their works, wherever they wandered. Saint Carthach was another Kerry noble who cast away the sword for the plain habit and staff of the missionary. He studied under Saint Comgall; he taught for 40 years in Bangor only to incur the wrath of the King Blathmac who drove him out. Soldiers were used in the work and I presume that Carthach, which means "Battler" resisted, as the monks in those times often did. Anyway, he went to Lismore, one of the largest schools and there he died and was buried in 637 A. D.

One of the most popular schools for the descendants of Kiar and Corc were those located at Clon mac Nois, which name means The Retreat for the Sons of the Noble. Here also were they buried, Kerry kings alongside of those from the other kingdoms, all gone the same paths to glory.

The ancient chronicles reveal a strange state of society. While learning went feverishly on within the schools and monasteries, outside there was murder and rapine, dynastic wars and raidings. Occasionally we see





an entry where some king, having grown old in the service of his people, and finding himself unable to bring peace and prosperity to them, or to unite the warring tribes under one strong central empire, laid aside his sword and crown, and taking on the humble character of a lay brother, a searcher for the Holy Grail, spent the rest of his life wandering over all the British Isles and Europe until he died humbly and oftentimes unknown for what he had been. After all, there is much for us to consider from their example!

All during antiquity Ireland was frequently raided by Saxons and Vikings, Phoenicians and other peoples, but with the 8th century came a more determined effort by the Vikings and Danes to establish a kingdom in Ireland. They succeeded in doing so, as well as also in Gaul and Britain. They established a kingdom centered at Dublin where they had their own kings. Gradually they intermarried with the Irish in Dublin, Cork, Waterford and at other places.

Two hundred years passed and Brian of the Dalcassian tribe of Munster, having nearly welded all Ireland into a single empire, decided to drive the Vikings and Danes out of the land. The Vikings gathered their legions from all over Europe and the western and northern islands, under King Sitric III of Dublin. King mac Murrough of Leinster with the Vikings, and his O'Connors Faley of course were with him. Brian of Munster however had the O'Connors Kerry and O'Connors Corcum Ruadh, and also the O'Connors from Connacht on his side.

The decisive battle occurred at Clontarf, on the beach where the long black ships of the Vikings came in thousands. Twelve thousand Vikings came; they were joined by nine thousand warriors from the Kingdom of the Spears; against them Brian of Thomond brought twenty thousand. The fight began at sunrise on April 23, 1014, and lasted until evening. The Irish gained a victory, Viking power was broken forever in Ireland, but O! What Price Glory! The High King was dead together with the flower of Irish leadership. Ireland never did recover from this loss, and her people had not yet recovered from their severe expenditure in blood and lead-





ership when the Normans came one hundred and fifty years later. The O'Connors Kerry lost their able general Mac Betha O'Connor who died in the midst of carnage rescuing his country from the enslavement which threatened it from longer presence of the Viking kings. The O'Connors Kerry should set aside a memorial day for him, for he is one of their great heroes.

It was just prior to the close of this Viking Era that the two Conchovairs lived, who founded the branches that bear their name. It was during the early part of the 10th century that there arose a Prince Conchovair of the tribe of Corc, who became the patriarch of the O'Connors Corc Modh Ruadh, and at the close of the 10th century, another of the same name, rose to notability in the line of Kiar, who brought forth a second clan called the O'Connors Kerry. From these two Princes have come all the O'Connors of Munster who are alive today. It would seem that a couple of birthdays added to the O'Connors calendar in their honor, could be very appropriately used.

Most of the Irish family names known today date from their period, and they are nearly all formed by the same process as the O'Connors whose story we are telling. Most of the old native Irish names however, were either changed or dropt from use thru the influence of the Clergy. The old names such as we have so frequently mentioned here, with translations of their meaning into English, savored too much of pagan times, and in their places were substituted the biblical names used today. Cathal and Cathaire and Aedh and Ruadh Rig became Charles and Hugh and Rory while Michael and John, Patrick and Timothy were adopted from the Hebrews.

The O'Connors of Munster, like their neighbors, were left without competent leadership; Malachi of the Collar of Gold who succeeded Brian was unable to complete the re-establishment of the central Irish monarchy undertaken by Brian, and the unruly and independent provincial kings and lords, made war among themselves without restriction. This further demoralized the nation, and a definite retrogression took place.

Before they could again find themselves the Normans came upon them with Prussian-like organization and





weapons. These Normans were the descendants of the Vikings who had conquered what became Normandy, and during the intervening time, they had learned feudalism and its military system. They were purse broken adventurers from Norman England and Wales whom the English king was overjoyed to see employed in Ireland, because he had been unable to reward them properly for their help in conquering England under William the First. They were a desperate lot and dangerous to the stability of the reigning dynasty; Ireland proved an ideal outlet for their energies.

While the invasion of Ireland was inevitable with the rise to power of London, the Irish were immediately responsible for the Norman attack. Mac Murrough, King over Leinster had invited Richard de Clare, known as Strong Bow, to help him recover his throne, having been expelled from it by King Roderick O'Connor of Connacht, for having eloped with the wife of Prince O'Rourke of Brefney. The bargain was made; Strong Bow was to recruit and land an army on the coast of Leinster; he was to marry Eva, daughter of Mac Murrough and succeed to the throne of Leinster when Mac Murrough died. All of which was done, and a Norman knight sat upon the ancient Gaelic throne!

The Normans came in ever-increasing numbers, and were generally successful in attack. Occasionally the Irish overpowered them, but the Normans were provided with more modern weapons and their discipline and organization were better. They erected great stone castles everywhere, and soon had Ireland caught in a network of these stone fortresses which were new to the Irish, and against which they had no adequate weapons.

The descendants of Raymond le Gros Fitz Gerald called the Fitz Maurices were first to encounter the O'Connors Kerry. The King of Desmond, Mac Carthy, provided plenty of trouble for the O'Connors too. Raymond le Gros had made a treaty with King Mac Carthy by which he was given ownership over vast acreage of the O'Connors. This was strictly against Irish law and beyond his authority. However, the Normans considered the transfer valid and built castles in the middle of the ancient patrimony of the O'Connors. Having dug





themselves in Kerry, they applied for and were given by King John of London, the titles of Barons of Lixnaw, Viscounts of Clanmaurice and Earls of Kerry. Here we have an alien people setting themselves up as governors over their fellow beings without a scintilla of excuse. The native Irish naturally continued to elect their own chiefs and to resent and oppose the invaders whenever occasion arose.

The 13th century brought a gradual loss to the Irish with more Normans constantly taking up their lands. In the 14th century Maurice Fitz Gerald was created the First Earl of Desmond by the English crown, thereby ousting the Mac Carthy King of Desmond, whose forebears back in the 12th century had been instrumental in donating lands to the Fitz Geraldts. The sins of the fathers were being visited upon their children unto the fourth generation.

The First Earl of Desmond was given the status of a Count Palatine; his authority was supreme; he was a vice regent in Ireland; he made war and peace, raised and cut off noblemen; taxed and freed his subjects. His army consisted of ten thousand mailed knights with 500 Fitz Gerald gentlemen as his bodyguard. He imported such families as the Crosbies, Pettys, Rices and Springs, Stacks, Hollys and scores of others, who were to drive out the Irish and appropriate their lands. Naturally this caused bloodshed.

In 1205 King John established the Counties of Kerry and Cork out of the lands of the O'Connors, both lines.

Gradually, as the generations passed, the Normans found that their Irish neighbors were not so bad, and they began to marry the Mac Carthy and O'Connor girls; The O'Connor Kerry still held his immense castle of Carrig-a-foyle, on Carrig island near the Shannon's mouth, and the Fitz Geraldts thru marriage, oft-times were proprietors also, altho the Irish title usually held it.

Finally, the Irish and the Normans came to sit down at the same table and be friends. There was plenty of land for them all. The Normans became more and more indistinguishable from the Irish and organized themselves in clans and tribes as did the Irish, began to use





the prefix "mac" instead of "fitz" both of which mean the same thing. This was all before the introduction of Protestantism by the English government, and then, the Norman-Irish rebelled. They resented being forced to change their faith, and the great and powerful Fitz Gerald's revolted in 1579.

The Butlers and Pelham were sent against them with a powerful army; they marched thru Munster and laid it waste. John O'Connor, son of Conor O'Connor, Lord of Kerry hearing of the Irish reverses, hastened to surrender his castle at Carrig-a-foyle, and it passed into English hands. Italian and Spanish troops were sent to help, but so badly broken were the O'Connors of Munster, and all the others, that there was nothing left to fight for.

In payment for his services in massacring the Irish, Sir Walter Raleigh was given 40,000 acres of Kerry lands, and he shaved off a generous slice for the poet Spencer, who loved his Kerry so well that he described it in his famous poem "The Faerie Queen" written as hooey propaganda for Queen Elizabeth.

The 17th century proved the finish of the O'Connors Kerry and of Corcumroe. In 1602 Kerry was absolutely destroyed; the few people who escaped the organized massacre hid in caves and in shacks in the deep forests and swamps. Cromwell ordered the dispossession of all the Irish and the planting of English in their places. A description of the murders done to accomplish this steal would turn the reader's disposition sour with horror. During all past history, in all nations, nothing ever surpassed the cruelties perpetrated upon the broken and defenseless Irish that were heaped upon them by the British Government! When England was at the height of her so-called Golden Age, and Shakespear and Bacon were laying the foundation of English intellectual supremacy, the London clique was carrying on the murder of an entire people in order to steal their land from them. It is a miracle that an O'Connor ever survived!

And then the men of Ireland were sought by the great continental nations as mercenary soldiers; they were unable to remain in Ireland, they could not take their families with them, and they had to go elsewhere





to earn money for the support of those they left behind. Hundreds of thousands of them joined the French and Spanish and Austrian armies. They never did get back.

While they were gone the English government committed another crime against humanity! The land was filled with women and children and the aged. The Bristol sugar merchants with vast holdings in the West Indies, seeing this cheap labor, got an act passed, the 6 Ann Chapter 2, allowing the arrest of these poor people, and with the right to ship them to the plantations to labor on them.

With this act began the slave drives that were no different from those familiar in Africa. Having gotten rid of the men folks, they now began kidnapping the women and children. They were hunted like cattle, roped and delivered aboard ship. Families were broken never more to see each other. Scattered over the British West Indies, mainly in the island of Montserrat, one may see thousands of the descendants of these exiles. They still retain the facial appearance of the Irish, they speak with a brogue, they bear Irish names, many of them have hair with a reddish tinge, but their skins are black!

The persecution continued far into the 19th century growing more temperate as the fathers of the last generation remember. The writer knows from hearing the tales of the Irish exiles of the early 19th century of the poverty and ignorance forced upon the people of Ireland, of the hatefulness of the landlords, of the terrible evictions by force of old and babes and the sick and the starving!

The British sovereigns had an opportunity to perform the act of raising a neighboring people into the light and comfort of modern civilization, of bringing about a mutually desirable union of the peoples, but they took on the character of brutes and tried to root the Irish out of their country, like hogs seeking food in the filth with their snouts digging about.

The Irish social system was destroyed, the language passed out of usage, their history was beclouded, and the old forms of government were destroyed completely.





English forms were forcibly imposed upon the people, and their patriarchal life was scrapped and for it was substituted the modern English Feudal-Industrial form of Society. And today, the Irish Free State is laying its foundations for the Irish state of the future; it is progressing rapidly in every way, while the bloody tyrant is as rapidly suffering disintegration. It will be interesting to watch the upward and downward streams as the scales of justice swing to the other extreme.

This closes the story of the O'Connors. A few remarks will be made relative to their spread over the world; one is always pleased to learn of accomplishments made by those related to him and who bear his name and that of his ancestors.





## The Broken Clans

The Flight of the Earls marked the final collapse of Irish native society and government. This event occurred on Friday, September 14, 1607. When the news became known thruout Ireland, the hearts of her people for the first time, lost courage. No people in all the world's history have shown a more fanatical love for their motherland, nor suffered as much, and for as long, for their right to self government. With the Flight of the Earls, darkness settled over the land, despair spread like a pestilence, the racial soul realized it was the end of Irish civilization as it has come down from ancient times; it marked the surrender to alien ideals, government, social organization, language and laws. All that had been Irish was about to vanish forever from the living world, and what people are more highly sensitive to such a calamity than the poetic, emotional Irish?

Read the verse of her poets after that tragic event, listen to her sorrowful songs, uttered in anguishing rhapsody from the lips of her exiles, and you will realize what it means to suffer as did the Irish, from the beginning of the 17th to the close of the 19th centuries.

From that time the children of Ireland fled from her impoverished and stricken shores, to all the countries of the globe; some went voluntarily and thousands were forcibly exiled as slaves or transported prisoners. France, Spain, Austria, Italy, America, Australia and Africa, began to meet exiled Irishmen.

It soon became noised about the Courts of Europe that the soldiers of Ireland were the best in the world, and they applied to England for permission to recruit their armies from the men of Ireland. England gladly gave her consent to their recruiting. England had no solution to the problem of Ireland; she wrecked Irish society by the use of violence and bigotry and ignorance, and having brought indescribable sufferings to a helpless people, she found herself paralyzed at the result and incapable of constructive policies.

To France went the first great exodus of soldiers for the famous Irish Brigade of the French army in 1691. The Penal Laws instituted by England made it impos-





sible for people to remain and be Irish, so they accepted the opportunity given by the French Empire to escape. Poverty prevented them from taking their families; they hoped to be able to send for them later.

What vain hopes! Bloody England quickly seized the excuse of saving those remaining behind, by encouraging their being seized as paupers, by West Indian sugar planters, who forcibly transported hundreds of thousands of them to the islands of the West Indies, during this absence of their men folks in Europe. Here they were scattered about and mixed with the blacks; poor old fathers, beautiful young colleens with their blue black hair and light blue eyes; aged mothers and children; cast to the fields with blacks and subject to the whips and worse of brutal overseers and owners! Their mixed blooded descendants may be seen thruout the West Indies; their men folks never saw them again!

The official records of the French army show that between the years of 1691 and 1745 no less than 450,000 Irishmen fell on the battlefields of Europe under French colors, and among them were the Connors and O'Connors and Conners from Kerry and Donegal, from Connacht and from Leinster.

One of the O'Connors Red enrolled as a Cadet in the Dillon regiment in 1731 and in 1780 we find him wearing the insignia of a Marshal of Camps and Armies and decorated with the Order of a Chevalier of St. Louis. There was a Major Charles Alexis O'Connor in the campaigns of 1761 to 1789 who also was a Chevalier of St. Louis. Here is a list compiled from the French records and published in "The Irish Abroad" by O'Donnel;

Sub Lieutenant Terry O'Connor	1786 to 1792
Capitaine O'Connor	1694
Lieut. Col. Jean O'Connor Kerry	1745
Capitaine O'Conner	1723
Lieut. Chas. A. O'Connor, Surgeon of the Hospital of the King	1724
Sub Lieut. Dennis O'Connor	1770
Capitaine Armand Hippolyte Lambert O'Connor, Chevalier of St. Louis	1775





Spain was the next to experience an invasion by the Irish; this was in the 18th century. Back to the land of their origin went the broken clans and soon the army of Spain was increased by entire regiments from Dublin, Ireland, Limerick, Hibernia, Waterford and the Ultonia troops, as they were named.

O'Connors were found in every rank and grade from Don Carlos O'Connor who was a Sergeant, to Don Juan O'Connor and the Count O'Connor who were both Super Captains in 1715. At this period there were 19 officers bearing the name O'Connor.

No country in Europe gained so much as did France, from the presence of brave and able Irishmen. It was natural that when the Irish revolt of 1798 failed, the Irish would seek service in the armies of Britain's greatest enemy, Napoleon Bonaparte. The Irish Legion became one of his most dependable forces. It was organized in 1803 and served during the campaigns in Holland, Portugal, Spain, Germany. With the Fall of the Empire, it was disbanded and reorganized as the Third Foreign Legion and later it became a regular line and cavalry regiment of the permanent army.

The most noted O'Connor of this Legion was Arthur O'Connor, one of the leading revolutionists of the 1798 revolt. He became a Brigadier General, was decorated with the knighthood of St. Louis; married an influential French lady; bought the old castle of Mirabeau and ended his days at Bignon in 1852.

There was a Capitaine Charles Patrice O'Connor in the 57th regiment of the line in 1819.

America attracted them by the thousand during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. During the American revolution there were 327 Connors, O'Connors and Conners in the American army, of whom 17 were commissioned officers of either the army or navy. Two of them were Lieutenant Colonels, three were Captains, two were Quartermasters, four were Lieutenants, one was a Cornet and one an Ensign. Three Captains of privateers were of this name.

The first O'Connor ever to land in America of whom there is record was an emigrant named Connor who





landed at Newport News, Virginia, from a ship called the Flying Harte in 1621.

Meagher's Irish Brigade of the Union Army during the Civil War had three O'Connors; one was Captain W. J. O'Connor of the 88th New York Volunteers; Captain Edward F. O'Connor of the famous old 69th New York, and Patrick J. O'Connor of the 63rd New York Volunteers.

Since then and until now, the members of the broken O'Connor clans have occupied positions of every conceivable nature thruout our commonwealth. At present one of them is head of the U. S. Shipping Board, others are Judges of Courts, politicians of power, leaders in business and in the professions. The 1929 register of officers of the regular and reserve navy and marine corps, show twenty-nine of the name. Two O'Connors with the "O" gone are Commanders; they are the highest ranking of the name in the Navy and the author here gives them the top o' the mornin' both being friends of his. John Francis Connors commands a big transport and supply ship. and E. H. Connor is the Engineer Officer of the Destroyer Base located at San Diego, California. There is a Commander of the Medical Corps, one Lieutenant Commander of the line, five Lieutenants of the line, two Lieutenants of the medical corps, two Lieutenants junior grade, two Ensigns, four Midshipmen, one Captain of Marines and one Marine Quartermaster, all named in one form or other of the O'Connor clan.

The lists of the U. S. Army, both active and retired show how persistent is historical tradition; there are twenty-seven of them among the officers of the army, ranging from two Major Generals down to Second Lewys, as they say.

When Australia began to be used by England as a penal colony, there was a Patrick O'Connor among the first exiles sent out to New South Wales on board the H. M. S. Boyd in 1798. Patrick was exiled because he tried to free his country from English rule when Robert Emmett became a martyr; he died soon after landing in Australia. Another Pat O'Connor was the first discoverer of gold in Australia in 1854. He helped also in





a revolt against England, fought a battle but was defeated by crown troops. J. H. O'Connor grew rich and philanthropic; the Rt. Rev. Daniel O'Connor was the first pastor of Melbourne Cathedral and Daniel O'Connor became Australia's richest citizen.

The Irish drifted into the service of England, as have other colonials, altho there have been Irishmen who would never serve England. London's most celebrated artist in 1855 was J. A. O'Connor. Fergus O'Connor was a powerful politician in Manchester, Liverpool and London from 1843 to 1855; he was a nephew of the famous Arthur O'Connor, the Irish rebel and who became the French General. There was a Major General Sir Luke O'Connor, K. C. B., V. C. also during the World War, in the English army. One of Britain's best diplomats was the Right Honorable Sir Nicholas Roderick O'Connor, G. C. B., K. C. B., G. C. M. G. He was Secretary of Legation in 1883, Ambassador to Peking in 1892 and Ambassador to St. Petersburg in 1895.

Bernard O'Connor Kerry was Court Physician to King John Sobieski of Poland in the 18th century; he was a historian also. The translator of Keating's History of Ireland in 1723 was Dermot O'Connor. The O'Connors seem to have taken to history naturally, there being a Brian O'Connor in 1770; Daniel Roderick O'Connor of Cork in 1798 and Roger O'Connor, a brother of Arthur O'Connor in 1802, all historians.

The list could be extended indefinitely, but for those who wish to follow them up in modern times, there are the various Who's Whos of the world, wherein thousands of them may be found, doing their share in the world's work and bringing honor, to their

## Broken Clan



## ADVERTISEMENT

---

### HISTORIES OF IRISH FAMILIES

Histories of other Irish families, similar to this volume, are being published as rapidly as they are completed, and may be purchased from the publishers, address given here below, for an even one dollar, or five dollars; the latter charge is for books bound in leather and with the purchaser's name in gold on the binding.

---

### IRISH COATS OF ARMS

For those who may wish to purchase Arms of their family, suitable for hanging in the home, or to be copied upon the door of the family automobile, the publishers have copies on parchment, hand painted, and guaranteed to be authentic; the Arms come in two sizes for \$2.50 and \$5.00 respectively. When ordering please mention which branch of the family you come from as shown in the pages of this book.

---

Publisher

IRISH FAMILY HISTORY  
PUBLISHING CO.,

Portsmouth Court and Strandway,  
Mission Beach, San Diego,  
California.



















